

REMARKS:

In the outstanding Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1-19. Claims 3, 6, 7, 9, 10, 13 and 15-18 are amended herein, and new claim 20 is added. No new matter is presented.

Thus, claims 1-20 are pending and under consideration. The rejections are traversed below.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 112¶2:

Claims 3-18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112¶2 as being indefinite. Claims 3, 6, 7, 9, 10, 13 and 15-18 are amended herein.

Therefore, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 102(e):

Claims 3-10 and 12-18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 7,062,465 (Shafiee).

Shafiee is directed to permitting a live agent to assist a customer at a terminal by navigating through content. According to Shafiee, the agent station (130) acts as a guide terminal and the kiosk (110) acts as a follower terminal for assisting the customer at the kiosk (110) via communications (see, col. 2, lines 5-15 and col. 4, line 60 through col. 7, line 5). As such, the agent station (130) in Shafiee is classified as the guide terminal always controlling the kiosk (110) based on interactive conferences or call exchanged with the kiosk (110).

Further, Shafiee explicitly states that a user group database listing user group names known to the session manager is not particularly relevant to the synchronized (web) browsing (see, col. 7, lines 25-43).

In contrast, the disclosed system and method establishes a remote operation between first and second devices that are in "a group relationship" by selectively assigning a master device or a slave device role to the first and second devices to establish a master-slave communication between first and second devices.

Independent claim 3 recites, "a signal receiving unit receiving a request from a first control unit" and "an execution unit executing processing in response to the request and generating processing results." Claim 3 further recites, "transmitting the processing results to the first control unit and to a second control unit different from the first control unit that is in a

group relationship with the first control unit”, where the first control unit operates “as a master in a master-slave communication established between the first control unit and the second control unit” that are in the group relationship. Independent claims 7 and 10 recite similar features.

Similarly, independent claim 13 recites, “receiving a processing request from a first control unit operating as a master in a master-slave communication established between the first control unit and a second control unit” and “transmitting the processing results to the first control unit and to the second control unit that is different from the first control unit and is in a group relationship with the first control unit responsive to said processing request.”

Independent claims 16-18 also recite, “transmitting processing results” to the first apparatus and to the second apparatus that is in “a group relationship”, where the first apparatus operates as “a master in a master-slave communication established between the first apparatus and the second apparatus” (“first and second control units” in claim 17).

Applicants respectfully submit that Shafiee does not teach or suggest each and every element of the independent claims including establishing “a master-slave communication” between first and second devices in “a group relationship”, as recited in independent claims 3, 7, 10, 13 and 16-18.

It is submitted that the independent claims are patentable over Shafiee.

For at least the above-mentioned reasons, claims depending from the independent claims are patentably distinguishable over Shafiee. The dependent claims are also independently patentable. For example, as recited in claim 5, the second control unit operating as a slave device comprises “a plurality of control units” (see also, claims 8 and 14).

Shafiee discusses a system (100) that may include one or more kiosks (100) (see, col. 4, lines 16-20) and does not teach or suggest the kiosks having units.

Thus, Shafiee does not teach or suggest a remote operation between first and second control units or devices in a group relationship where the control unit or device operating as a slave device comprises “a plurality of control units”, as recited in claims 5, 8 and 14 (“plurality of apparatuses” in claim 8).

Therefore, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103(a):

Claims 1, 2, 11 and 19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shafiee and U.S. Patent No. 6,584,493 (Butler).

No motivation to combine Shafiee and Butler

Applicants respectfully traverse the obviousness rejection based on Shafiee and Butler because there is insufficient evidence for a motivation to modify the Shafiee system that establishes a communication between the kiosk and the agent stations by incorporating Butler for the following reasons.

The outstanding Office Action states that it would have been obvious "to combine Butler's teaching of disabling input operations " to the Shafiee system. The record, however, fails to provide the required evidence of a motivation for a person of ordinary skill in the art to perform such modification. While Butler may provide a reason for locking mice and keyboards of members participating in a conference, Shafiee fails to suggest why operations of the kiosk or the agent station that are indicated as being engaged in an interactive communication to assist a customer should be locked, such as discussed in Butler.

Even if Shafiee and Butler were combined, the claimed system and method are distinguishable for the following reasons.

The Examiner acknowledges that Shafiee does not specifically teach disabling user operation of the second device, but relies on Butler as teaching the same. However, Butler is limited to a global collaboration application program where a member's collaboration drove the mice and keyboards of the other members collaborating to lock (see, col. 3, lines 10-28).

As mentioned above, Shafiee is limited to communication between an agent station preset to act as a guide terminal and the kiosk that acts as a follower terminal.

Independent claim 1, by way of example recites, "disabling, by the management device, user operation of the second device and establishing a remote operation relationship between the first device as a master device and the second device as a slave device in a master-slave communication established between the first device and the second device." Claim 1 further recites, "... sending the Web page to the first device and to the second device that is in a group relationship with the first device" and "displaying the Web page on a display of the first device and the second device", where the second device responds to "commands of the first device operating as the master device."

Similarly, claim 2 recites that the management device “disables user operation of the second device and establishes a remote operation relationship including a master-slave communication between the first device as a master device and the second device as a slave device” and sends the Web page obtained to the first device and to the second device that is “in a group relationship with the first device.”

Independent claim 19 recites, “identifying a group affiliation of a first device requesting a connection”, “transmitting a request of the first device to a second device having the group affiliation of the first device to obtain information on behalf of the first device” and “establishing a remote operation between the second device operating as a master client and the first device operating as a slave client by disabling a user operation with respect to the first device.”

Shafiee and Butler, alone or in combination, do not teach or suggest the above-discussed features of the claimed system and method including establishing a remote operation between devices of “a group”, as recited in independent claims 1, 2 and 19.

Dependent claim 11 recites, “user operation of the second apparatus is disabled when the second apparatus is being remotely operated.”

Shafiee and Butler, do not teach or suggest remote operation where “the second apparatus is disabled when the second apparatus is being remotely operated”, as recited in claim 11 (see also claim 10, upon which claim 11 depends).

Therefore, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

NEW CLAIM:

New claim 20 has been added to recite, “identifying a group relationship of the first device and the second device, said group relationship indicating whether the first device and the second device are operating as a master device or a slave device in a master-slave communication.” Claim 20 further recites, “receiving a request to receive web page content from the first device identified as the master device” and “transmitting the web page content to both the first device and the second device in response to said request from the first device.”

Shafiee and Butler do not teach or suggest the remote operation method “identifying a group relationship... indicating whether the first device and the second device are operating as a master device or a slave device in a master-slave communication”, as recited in claim 20.

It is submitted that new claim 20 is patentably distinguishable over Shafiee and Butler.

CONCLUSION:

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

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